

Uniting a “sense of creative imperative” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*) with the “ability to get under the skin of [the music’s] core material,” (*The Scotsman*), Douglas Buchanan cultivates cross-disciplinary careers as composer, conductor, performer, and educator. Based in Baltimore, Maryland, he teaches as composition faculty at Dickinson College, music theory and musicology faculty at the Peabody Conservatory, and serves as Artistic Director of the Maryland Choral Society and Choirmaster and Organist at St. David’s Episcopal Church.

Recognized for “clear, personal music,” Buchanan’s works are “filled with terrific orchestral color and weight, not to mention feeling“ (*The Baltimore Sun*), wherein his cross-disciplinary musicianship is evident. In linking music with poetic text and visual art, his works create a network of images, words, and sound to inspire a mythic experience akin to ritual, and frequently address issues of injustice and environmental concern. As recipient of the 2017-2019 Sackler Prize, he and librettist Caitlin Vincent created *Bessie and Ma*, an opera addressing issues of racism and sexism by exploring the lives of Bessie Coleman, the first female pilot of color in America, and Ma Ferguson, the first female governor of Texas. As 2016-2018 Composer-in-Residence with the Dallas Chamber Symphony, Buchanan composed *Crossroads*, a chamber symphony featuring the Dallas Street Choir—an ensemble particularly welcoming to those experiencing homelessness—with poetry written by the Street Choir’s members addressing life on the street. The piano cycle *Colonnades*—a recipient of the Presser Award and an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers Award—along with its companion work for organ solo, *Welkinharmonie*, confronts questions of the role of the artist in an ecologically unstable world.

Buchanan has been recognized with grants and awards from The Arts Community Alliance, New Music USA, the Sackler Prize, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers Awards, the Symphony in C Young Composers Award, the Macht Prize, and the American Prize, among others. His work has been supported by residencies with the Dallas Chamber Symphony, the Broken Consort, the LUNAR new music ensemble, and the Shin Pond Artist’s Residency. Commissions have included works for the University of Connecticut, the Occasional Symphony, Symphony No. 1, the Annapolis Opera, Rhymes with Opera, and noted poet and Shostakovich collaborator Yevgeny Yevtushenko. He completed his doctorate at the Peabody Conservatory under the tutelage of Michael Hersch. Additional compositional study includes work with Nicholas Maw, Jack Gallagher, Libby Larsen, Chen Yi, Sally Beamish, Melissa Hui, Alasdair Nicholson, and Peter Mowrey, and masterclasses with Christopher Rouse, Christopher Theofanidis, and Karel Husa.

As a choral conductor and music director, Buchanan brings his devotion to new music to the choral stage, eliciting “assured, nuanced singing” from the ensembles he leads, inspiring a “keen sense of mood, dynamics, and pacing” (*The Baltimore Sun*). Through his programming he particularly supports emerging composers, and advocates for an increasingly diverse body of repertoire through commissioning and recording. With the support of a Dean’s Incentive Grant from the Peabody Conservatory, he and his brother founded *Voices Rise: A Baltimore Choir of Hope*, a choir particularly inviting to those experiencing homelessness and financial distress.

He is fortunate to have many opportunities to sing with and accompany his wife, Kelly, a mezzo-soprano, and also enjoys microtonal interspecies improvisation with his black lab, Grover.